

RESERVATION OF GRAVE SPACES

It is possible for a grave space to be legally reserved by authority of a faculty, the jurisdiction to do so resting wholly in the judicial discretion of the Consistory Court. A petition for faculty must be lodged by sending it to the Diocesan Registrar, Diocesan Registry, Minster Chambers, 42/44 Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3TX. **It should be noted that faculties for the reservation of grave spaces are not granted as a matter of course and are generally only given in exceptional circumstances.**

The following details must be included in a petition:

1. Full name (including all forenames), address **and age** of each petitioner and if more than one petitioner, their relationship, e.g. husband and wife. Please note that reservations should usually only be sought by those over the age of 50 and will usually only be granted for a period of 30 years (but see note below).
2. Normally each person desiring to be buried in the plot asked for should be a petitioner. However, if that is not possible for some special reason, then written consent to the petition or copy of any Power of Attorney, if applicable, should be attached to the petition.
3. The area of space to be reserved, given in square feet or metres. (For guidance, an average grave space is 1m x 2m, or 2 sq m.) For a space for cremated remains, the average might be 60cm x 60cm, making 0.36 sq m.
4. Whether the space to be reserved is to be used for a single-depth grave or a double-depth grave for full burial, or for the burial of cremated remains. (In order to maximise use of space in a churchyard, it is usual for double spaces to be double-depth rather than side-by-side.) Side-by-side reservations (usually due to a high water table within the churchyard) will be two separate applications which will incur two fees.
5. The amount of money the petitioner undertakes to pay to the Parochial Church Council towards the upkeep and maintenance of the churchyard. This is usually a one-off **donation**, not an annual payment, and should be agreed before a petition is lodged although it becomes payable only when a faculty is issued and granted. The Incumbent and PCC can advise on the amounts usually paid.

The following documents must accompany a petition:

1. A plan of the churchyard (or a portion of it) showing the exact position of the space to be reserved and giving measurements and distances from the boundaries of the churchyard or some permanent conspicuous point, and ideally the row and grave number. The plan need not be elaborate but it must be sufficient to enable the plot to be identified at the time the petition is lodged and in the future.
2. A copy Resolution of the PCC, signed by the Chairman or Secretary, supporting the petitioner's request, naming the applicant and identifying the grave space.
3. A separate signed written consent of the Incumbent (or Rural Dean in the absence of an incumbent) to the reservation **to include an estimate of the spaces remaining in the churchyard and the average number of burials per annum for the last five years.**
4. Any other document or statement which the petitioner may consider to be relevant to his/her request and may assist the Court.

A faculty is limited to the number of years decided by the Court partly out of consideration of the age of each applicant. (Under Section 8 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Measure 1964 no such faculty can exceed the maximum term of 100 years), and partly out of consideration of the number of burial spaces still available. Where there is space in the churchyard for less than 30 years of anticipated burials, any faculty for a grave space reservation is likely to be for that shorter period. So if there is only room for 15 years of burials, any reservation is likely to be limited to just 15 years. **Where there is less than 10 years of space a reservation is likely to be refused unless exceptional circumstances exist.**

The faculty fee £305.40 payable by cheque to Batt Broadbent **changes at the beginning of each new year** (incl VAT). The fee is non-refundable. Please send a cheque made payable to "Batt Broadbent" to the Registry with your completed petition and accompanying papers. If you have any questions, **or want to check the current fee**, please telephone the Registry on 01722 432390.